



Match Report

Opponent: Salisbury University

Date: 16 OCT 05

First Match:	Navy 0	SU 17	A Side
Second Match:	Navy 29	SU 21	B Side

The day was crisp and sunny as the Mids prepared to take on the tough and aggressive defending Division II national champs from Salisbury University of Maryland. Before taking the pitch the Navy men did clapper drills to get their blood and adrenaline flowing—and it showed. Salisbury kicked to Navy and the Mids dug in for the long haul, rucking low and crashing



Navy Scrum-half Andrew Chess tries to find daylight amid a physical Salisbury squad.

hard. The Mids came close to scoring twice in the first half, even carrying a maul into the try zone only to be held up and unable to touch the ball down for a try. They lost nearly every scrum and lineout in the first half and Salisbury used every opportunity to wheel and steal, respectively. Much credit should be given to the Navy

defense, however, as they kept Salisbury's point total modest—most of Salisbury's victories this season have come by forty points or more. Despite some aggressive offensive crashing by the forwards, staunch defense, and kicking to space, the Salisbury offense was too much, scoring two tries in the first fifteen minutes of the half, with one conversion kick made, bringing the score to 12-0.

Navy opened up the second half more aggressively and a bit more focused, despite being physically tenderized by the notoriously physical Salisbury ruggers. Berg surprised the Salisbury forwards with a high-bouncing squib kick that produced a fumble with Navy gaining the possession. The rest of the half was a series of failed Navy lineouts and scrums and back and forth kicking in attempts to piece together scoring drives by each side. Despite hard crashing by the Navy forwards and tough up the middle running by the Navy backs, they could not manage any points. Navy did attempt a penalty kick from 18 meters out, but Kevin Mott toed the ball and it

went low and left. But navy recovered the kick and tried to drive to the try line, only to be sent back by a kick from the potent boot of the Salisbury fullback. Salisbury put one more try in Navy's end thirty-four minutes into the half and missed the points after. Navy had one more drive down the field using several kick for touches by Berg, but to no avail. The whistle blew and the final score was Salisbury 17, Navy 0. Overall the Mids played much better than expected against a seasoned Salisbury line-up. Tough running and heads up play by the Navy defense, particularly 8-man Kevin Mott, Fullback Ander Heilles and wing Art Griffen, and accurate kicking by Flyhalf Ethan Berg, kept Navy within reach of victory. The Navy forwards played very hard and smart, but could not capitalize on the opportunities.

The second match saw an explosion of Navy offensive activity early on, as Adam Young converted three penalty kicks for points in the first 15 minutes of the half from 22, 35, and 40 meters out. Young was also awarded a penalty try after a high tackle on the left side of the tryline at the 33 minute mark. Always on the attack, 8-man Clayton Sears dragged three defenders three meters from the try-line for a try with just two minutes left in the half. The Midshipmen dominated offensive play and kept the Salisbury Seagulls at bay all during the half with hard-nosed defense and crisp passes by the

forwards and backs, respectively. Score at half was Navy 21, Salisbury 0.

The Second half saw a more relaxed Navy side, and the 'Gulls took full advantage, scoring hard-fought tries at 15 and 20 minutes, converting both and bringing the score to 14-21 Navy. But the Mids were not done yet as Young converted yet another penalty for a field goal setting the score to 24-14, Navy. Salisbury came back hard and determined, scoring another try and converting at 30 minutes to make the game 24-21. The Mids kept the pressure on and took their time, eating up the clock. On the final drive Sears scored again from three meters out crashing and driving into the Sea Gull wing and full-back as time expired. The conversion attempt was unsuccessful. Final score Navy 29, Salisbury 21.

~ A. J. CHESS reporting